

OUR CAPE VERDE NEIGHBORS

By Helen Kirby and Mary Cadigan

Here in Duxbury we have had in our population since the late 19th century a highly visible yet rather unknown ethnic group. Because the Cape Verde Islanders have generally darker skins than the rest of us, we may confuse them with the American Negro. Unlike the American Negro, who came to us in chains, the Cape Verde Islander came freely, as immigrants eager to start a new life in America, with motivation comparable to that of the first immigrant, the Pilgrims, and later German, Irish, Italian immigrants: life in a new world promised to be somehow an improvement.

Off the west coast of Africa, out from Senegal lies the Cape Verde Islands; nine of them were discovered in the early 15th century by the Portuguese navigator Joao Fernandes. Volcanic, rocky, uninhabited, they were ideally suited to the purpose for which Portugal used them. Fogo, Brava, and others of the nine became a place of exile for political prisoners. Since the islands were uninhabited, women were brought from the mainland of Africa and the ethnic group, called Cape Verde Islanders developed, some quite dark skinned, some light, some in between.

SAILORS RECRUITED

During the 19th century, whalers out of New Bedford recruited sailors from among these islanders and brought them back

to New Bedford. Others came later on steamers first to New Bedford and Providence, often working out of these ports as fishermen or as stevedores and later moving on to other parts of Cape Cod, and into Carver, Plymouth, and Duxbury where they found work on the bogs. Here in Duxbury they now constitute 5% of our population.

Among Duxbury Cape Verdians are the names Amado, Fernandes and Veiga. Naturally the families are interrelated, since a man emigrating from the islands would, after establishing himself here, send home for his family or his betrothed. Theodore Amado is typical. Coming here in 1901 aged 16, literate in Portuguese only, he worked on a farm for years before sending for Mary

Veiga.

During these years he lived with a group of Cape Verdian men in a shanty at the edge of a bog, the men doing their own elementary cooking and housekeeping. Each year at the end of the cranberry season in the late fall the men made simple but large purchases of food and necessities from merchants in New Bedford. The supply truck would deliver to the shanty tubs of lard, hundred pound bags of rice, quantities of sugar, tea, coffee, supplies sufficient to see them through the winter when they would not be earning. Sometimes winter work for the lumber companies increased their means. Life was hard. In spite of the traditional camaraderie of working gangs, story-telling, singing old country tunes, making accordion music, playing cards, this climate must have tried the stamina of men from tropical islands.

THE PROCEDURE

The bog workers, besides picking the crop, built and cultivated the bogs. Tools and equipment belonged to the bog owners, who would leave everything in the charge of one man, a foreman chosen from among the workers; such a man would enjoy a salary or an annual

wage although not employed during the winter. In time a man was able to establish his individual home and send for his family, or make a return trip to fetch a wife or family.

When Mary Veiga betrothed to Theodore Amado, came here traveling thirty days in a sailing vessel, the newly married couple started their housekeeping in a little rented house in Carver, later moving to Duxbury. Here in Duxbury their only son, Antonio and his only sister Lillian went to the Ashdod School. Antonio remembers with affection his teacher of forty years ago, Miss Marianne Coughlin, now Mrs. Hannigan who taught the first three grades, about 15 to 20 children in one room. On winter mornings she often greeted her shivering pupils with hot cocoa made on the pot-bellied stove in the classroom. Gratitude to her is in every smiling remembrance.

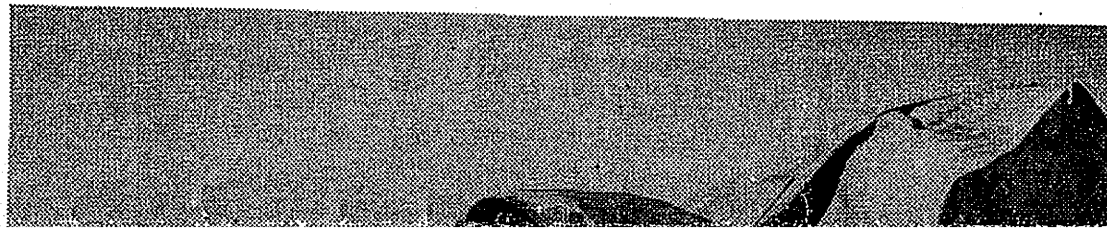
When he grew older, Antonio worked during school vacations helping cook, serve and clean -- a boy of all trades -- at a summer boarding house on Franklin St. Leaving school he followed his father as a bog worker at \$12 a week. In the depression he left Duxbury to become a foundry chipper in the steel mills of Ohio, work which pre-

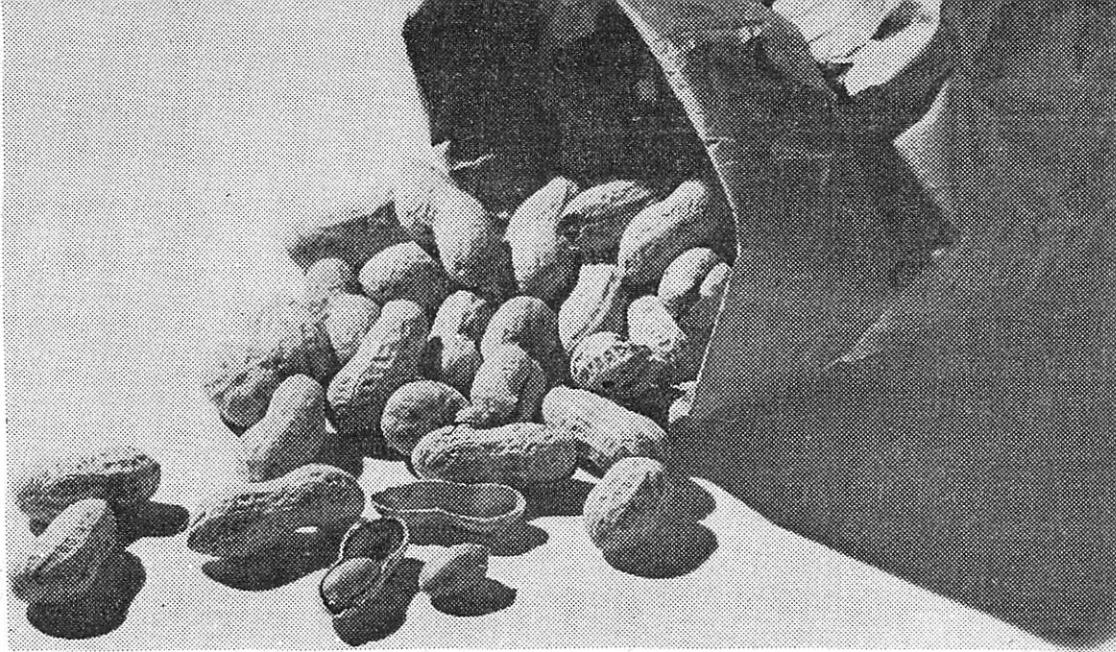
pared him for employment in the Charlestown Navy Yard during World War II. His wife, Mary Rogers, (Rogers derived from Dias Da Rosa) is a graduate of Whitman High School. Of their nine living children, their oldest girl Alice won from DHS a scholarship to Burdett's Secretarial School. With this training she has enjoyed positions as private secretary in Boston, Taiwan, Washington and is now employed at Hampton, Va.

HIS SCHOOLING

Antonio furthered his own education by earning a diploma in 1962 from the Massachusetts Trade School. Now in addition to his trade he works at the Plymouth Rubber Company. Here, when new workers have just come from the Azores, he is sometimes asked to act as an interpreter for he has kept alive the Portuguese learned from the old people. Years ago, shortly after Antonio and Mary returned from the first vacation they had ever managed to arrange together, he was seriously injured in an auto accident. The outpouring of sympathy from the people of Duxbury and Marshfield comforted the whole family. For the three months he was unable to work they were showered with gifts from Kiwanis, the Legion, churches, all groups, even with a great basket of toys for the children. These kindnesses the family will never forget.

Another important name among the Cape Verdians is Fernandes. "Uncle Peter" Fernandes, who lives in the house at the corner of Franklin and Congress streets used in the 1930's for Americanization classes, was one of the earliest to immigrate to Duxbury. With his brother Manuel he worked in the





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bring over other members of the family. Back on the Islands, the younger generation looked upon America not only as a land of opportunity but as a land of fabulous wealth, gold paved streets. So when Manuel's first son, Fidelis, came to this country and saw how his father and uncle had labored for the money they had been sending home, and that he, too, would be expected to earn his living by the sweat of his brow, he was indeed disillusioned. Life on the island, surfing along the coast, basking in the sun seemed idyllic in contrast to the dreary, arduous work in the bogs. But he did not take the next boat home; he became reconciled to the work and saw the advantages in his new country. Manuel Fernandes in time opened a store and served his community selling foods and goods, maintaining the sort of meeting a general store often becomes. Peter with his skill in wood carving made for sale axe handles and such practical items. In these circumstances of life barter was a common trading means, and customers would often exchange eggs from their little poultry yards for tobacco or sugar.

MEET THE VEIGAS

On Franklin St. also is the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Veiga and their beautiful farm. The perfection with which the house and grounds are maintained is an inspiration, and their strawberries in June are ambrosial.

The gentle unassuming Cape Verdian women sometimes do light work on the bogs and farm, but in the whole their work is within the home where they hold an honored position. It is beautiful to see the son, a grown man entering the house, bow to the mother and kiss her.

*He died on April 30, 1967.

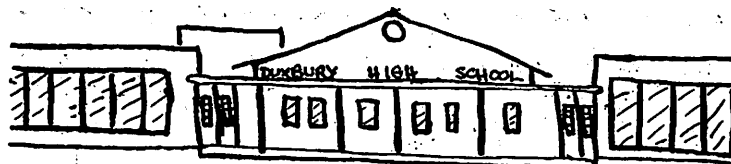
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hand. In preparation for the great traditional celebrations as the feast of St. John the Baptist in June or the Christening of a child, the women cook and serve enormous feasts, always including a chicken rice dish and sometimes even a roast steer. According to a custom originating in the islands they also take part in loading the festive tree with food and drink of all kinds, so that even though the celebration extends into the third day there is an abundance for all. Featured at such feasts are the cranberry and grape wines made by the men. Among people so imbued with Christian traditions, the wine perhaps has a religious significance as well as contributing gaiety. Religion has always been an integral part of their lives. Witness the hardship endured for the sake

of worship. On Sundays many walked long miles from Duxbury to St. Joseph's Church in Kingstons. When preparations for First Communion began, the father would leave everything and drive the children in a horse and wagon to church for instructions. Sometimes a small room or corner of the house served as a "saint's room," a place for private or family prayer arranged for those too old to walk the long distance to church.

We asked who would mediate differences or settle quarrels and were told, "There are no quarrels." One word or glance from Manuel Fernandes or Raymond Veiga and obstreperous youth or potential trouble subsides. Without benefit of patriarchal title, these men are



by Kathy Keenan and Julia Fellows

CONCERT TOMORROW

The Newfound Memorial High School from Bristol, New Hampshire, will combine with the DHS band tomorrow night to present a joint concert in DHS auditorium beginning at 8 p.m. Peter Parady of NMHS will share conducting honor with Duxbury's Roger Jarvis. It promises to be a pleasant evening for music lovers.

HONOR ROLL

Seventy-five students in grades 7 through 12 earned B or better in all major subjects to make the honor roll at the end of the third marking period. Of those, three -- sophomore Deborah Kelso, 8th grader Carole Peters, and 7th grader Sherry Quirk -- have A or better in all major subjects, qualifying for high honors. The complete list follows:

10th GRADE

Danielle Bourque, Lyon Carter, Cynthia Cushing, Marcia Hagger, Diane L'Heureux, Patricia Moss, Ann Post, Robert Tuttle, Jill Van Well.

11th GRADE

Joyce Blakeman, Julia Fellows, Andrea Garland, Laurie Gorham, Mark Lanyon, Joyce Hall, Bonnie Mathewson, James Page, Louise Pape, Jean Sencaubaugh.

10th GRADE

Leonard Ariagno, Kathy Boynton, Deborah Davis, Deborah Dickson, Jane Dwyer,

ors), Douglas King, Walter Mayo, Jean McCaig, Richard McEvoy, June Oliver, Casey Power, Ann Perry, Hope Peters, Virginia Pyle, Philip Smith, Nancy Spence, John Vickers, Judith Walker.

9th GRADE

Marian Boynton, Lindsay Beane, Denise Cope, Lynn Chase, Roxanne Desmarais, Amy Gazin, Ellen Grady, Barbara Hogan, Susan James, Peter Brown, Scott Livermore, Lee Milligan, David Pickles, Joan Randall, Debra Washburn.

8th GRADE

Peter Chadwick, Sally Clark, Terry Edera, Judy Handy, Hersylvia Kelso, Carole Peters (High Honors), Beth McNeill, Carolyn Spence, Richard Rawson, Chris Roveto.

7th GRADE

Colleen Dahlen, Richard Dedekian, Nancy Hall, Hugh Fellows, John Lewis, Heather McCarthy, Sherry Quirk (High Honors), Edward Rogerson.

LATE SCORE

On Monday night here, the Green Dragons edged South Shore Vocational, 4-3.

Dave Shea, who started for Duxbury, was relieved by George McEvoy, who struck out 7 of the 9 batters he faced. Content with that? Nay. After Phil Swanson hit himself into scoring position, McEvoy drove him home with a sacrifice fly, to win the game.

WE THE PEOPLE

BY GLORIA QUINN

Approximately 70 min. by automobile from Duxbury there is a town named Barrington, R.I., a community that looked much like Duxbury some 10-15 years ago, a residential town with little industry, much wealth and very strong community pride. (Lacking though, one must admit, some of the charm of Duxbury).

It didn't take long, however, for people who preferred to live in the suburb to discover the advantages of living in such a community. Excellent schools, good zoning laws, active community organizations, churches of every denomination, a general all-around interest in "we the people!"

We, the People however, included Retarded Children. Parents of these children were concerned over the lack of interest and programs in the surrounding area for their children. A local group was formed and discussions brought forth the definite need for this problem to be presented to the community for help and acceptance.

The First Congregational Church of Barrington offered the use of their church building and class of 3-6 year-old retardates started on a pre-school nursery program that eventually became state-wide. It is now a law in Rhode Island that all retarded children be educated, beginning at age three.

The Barrington School Department has a Special Education Department headed by a director, psychologists, special teachers, and a full staff trained specifically for the purpose. Separate classes for trainables and educables and emotionally disturbed are in the system. This town has become a resource center dealing in the area of educating the mentally retarded.

And We the People! Respond they did! The local junior women's club sponsors a swimming program once a week at the YMCA. Retarded children swim well and trophies are awarded for pool races each year. The shopping center runs a Gay Nineties Day annually and the local Retarded Children's Parents' Association sponsors a display of articles made by retarded children at the festival. As much as \$1,500 is raised each year and presented to the State Institution for Retarded Children in North Kingstown, R.I. Barrington College, R.I., has offered its campus for use every summer for an 8-week camp program for retarded children. Local organizations sponsor parties, gifts, equipment. The local teenagers (125 strong) have formed a Youth Association for Retarded Children. They volunteer their services. They alone have started a recreation program on Saturday afternoons. When they could be at local beaches swimming they are joyfully devoting their time to these children. Towns around Barrington are included in the program.

RETARDED: WHAT'S THAT? It's just a word. Parents, schools, friends and teenagers in Barrington and vicinity do not hide or ignore this problem. They discuss retardation. To them it is a privilege to help these children develop themselves to their full potential -- to be accepted by their community with pride so they can be part of "We the People."

celebrating, the Duxbury Cape Verdians are especially blessed in the security of family ties. Unlike other immigrants to America who have forgotten their origins, Cape Verdians continue traditions of their homeland -- the religion, music, feasts, gentle manners -- sometimes the language.

Perhaps the continuing migration from the Azores and other Portuguese islands will help keep alive these customs and this language, and so enrich our community with this variety.

4-H PLANS JULY 4 FLOAT

The 4-H Town Committee met on April 28 at the home of Arthur Chandler of Franklin St., to plan the Duxbury Days float. Further arrangements will be made at the May 19 meeting. Members will attend the 4-H auction in East Middleboro.



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